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Addendum

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President's summary

Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people

(Agenda item 11 (b))

1. Twenty delegates, including six groups, commended the secretariat's support to the Palestinian people. In their view, the Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people (TD/B/61/3) was excellent, as it was thorough, professional, impartial, factual, insightful, timely and transparent.

2. The representative of the secretariat said that even before the recent military confrontation in Gaza, the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory had deteriorated in 2013 and 2014. Further, the occupation of Area C had jeopardized the economic viability of the two-State solution. He listed recommendations for Area C and Gaza's reconstruction, which should not be confined to a humanitarian response, but should be extended to development and rebuilding the destroyed productive base.

3. The representative of the State of Palestine thanked UNCTAD for the Report and its support to the Palestinian people. Development could not be achieved while the occupying power continued to transform Palestine into a market for Israeli products. Gaza had been under persistent siege and had suffered three destructive wars in the past seven years. Israel continued to block the access of Palestinians to 75 per cent of their land in Area C and to misappropriate 85 per cent of the water in the West Bank. The international community should hold Israel accountable for the crimes it had committed and boycott all businesses related to settlements.

4. Most delegates expressed concern over the grave socioeconomic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially with regard to its geographic fragmentation, the humanitarian toll of the Israeli military attack and siege of Gaza, poverty and unemployment, and the growing expansion of settlements.

5. Many delegates welcomed a press release[1] issued in September 2014 highlighting the consequences of the military attack on Gaza. Although it had not been covered in the Report, it was to be hoped that the issue would appear in future reports.

6. Several delegates called on Israel to shoulder its responsibilities under international law and end the recurrent military attacks on Gaza.

7. Most delegates concurred with the Report's assessment of the impact of the occupation of Area C and called for a fundamental change in policy to preserve the viability of the two-State solution.

8. The representative of the European Union and its member States said that it was the largest donor to the Occupied Palestinian Territory and remained committed to the two-State solution and to the Palestinian Authority as the foundation of the Palestinian State. For a durable solution to the Gaza crisis, there could be no return to the status quo, which was unsustainable.

9. Some delegates welcomed the conference on reconstructing Gaza, to be held by the Governments of Egypt and Norway in Cairo on 12 October 2014.

[1] http://unctad.org/en/pages/PressRelease.aspx?OriginalVersionID=204.

10. Many delegates expressed concerns about the status of Palestinian women, who, due to occupation, had the highest unemployment rates in the world and bore the brunt of occupation.

11. All twenty delegates commended UNCTAD for its technical assistance to the Palestinian people, which had proven to be a valuable model for capacity-building under adverse and severe conditions. Some delegates said that securing extrabudgetary resources remained critical for enhancing UNCTAD support to the Palestinian people.